

## PARKS AND RECREATION ANNUAL REPORT

### FOCUS ON COMMUNITY DESIRES DEFINES YEAR

#### Highlights...

- Wyoming Senior Centers experienced an annual participation rate of **68,945**
- **160** man hours were dedicated to playground maintenance and inspection
- **826** children participated in Wyoming's soccer program
- **4,405** children were served through the summer Play and Learn program
- **8,193** man hours were dedicated to general facility maintenance, an additional 3.091 to athletic facilities

Why do the citizens support park and recreation services? What is the impact of our programs in improving the quality of life for the City of Wyoming? How are we making our limited funding stretch even further to maintain and expand services? If there is one theme that is expounded upon within the Parks and Recreation Department it is that of *evaluation*.

Early in FY 2003 we saw the conclusion of the Park Inventory and Facility Assessment—a document and database full of evaluative information on the quantity and quality [condition] of facilities within our 20 parks. For over three years now, each recreation program has received an annual program evaluation. Such professional assessment is coupled with participant evaluations allowing for a clear picture of the success of an individual program, ensuring a cost-benefit analysis demand for service.

Significant energy was given to securing public input for the new 5-Year Community Recreation Master Plan. A detailed telephone survey of 380 registered voters evaluated opinions toward the City's parks and recreation system and services. Four public forums were held to gather public opinion on Youth Athletic Activities, Community Cultural Arts and Special Events, Older Adult and Adult Activities, and Land Acquisition, Preservation, and Use. Five focus group sessions were held directly with teens and pre-teens within Grandville, Godfrey-Lee, and Wyoming Public School Districts. The information obtained through these evaluations proved a vital resource in the creation of the community's new 5-Year Recreation Master Plan.

This report is designed to give the reader an overview of the Parks and Recreation Department's operations and its impact on the community. Begun in FY 2001, our annual report is an important tool in imparting to the community how it is realizing value for park and recreation services, as well as to affirm that the operations are delivered at efficient, effective, and quality levels.

For additional information or comment on this report, or to arrange for a guest speaker, please contact the Parks and Recreation Department at (616) 530-3164.



**Listening to citizens, patrons, maximizes our potential impact to improving our communities quality of life.**

## MOVE SERVES MIDDLE SCHOOLERS

During fiscal year 2003, the Wyoming Parks and Recreation Department designed an after-school program for Godfrey Lee Public School 6<sup>th</sup> grade students called Youth on the M.O.V.E. (*Motivation, Opportunity, Value and Effort*). Funding for the program was made possible by a grant from the Wyoming Community Foundation Youth Advisory Committee.

The purpose of M.O.V.E. is to provide a safe, structured and nurturing environment where students learn positive life-enhancing academic, socialization and physical activity skills. The program is designed for 6<sup>th</sup> graders, an underserved population. The program specifically targets children that are not participating

in extracurricular activities.

M.O.V.E. is an eight week program that is held once a week from 3:00-5:00 pm, addressing a time frame that has been identified in numerous studies and reports as a period where juvenile delinquency incidents occur most frequently. Students participate in a planned education-related activity for the first hour and the second hour they participate in fun, exciting fitness-related activities. Participants have indicated that they have changed their attitudes toward health, nutrition and fitness.



**Developing a sense of community responsibility is part of Youth on the Move.**

The Youth on the M.O.V.E. program was recognized by an article in the Grand Rapids Press and by a letter of appreciation received from Amway co-founder, Richard DeVos.

*"Proud to participate in such a quality program for our children, which has brought priceless experience to their lives. THANK YOU!!!"*

*-City of Wyoming  
participant evaluation*

## RECREATION PARTICIPATION POSTS SLIGHT DECLINE

Overall program participation remains stable, however specific programs saw significant program reductions in 2003.

Over 120 recreation, education, and leisure programs were offered throughout the year. Total non duplicative participation by program type reached 44,635—a 4% reduction in participation over the previous year.

For the second year in a row, the number of sites offered for the Summer Play and Learn Program were reduced as demands on the budget have increased. This free, drop-in program was held at 5 sites versus 6 sites the previous year, reducing service by 958.

Although participation in organized leisure programs at Jackson Park

Pool have remained stable (EG: water aerobics, swim lessons), passive aquatic programs such as lap swim, open swim, and family swim have continued to decline. Participant surveys indicate this is a result, in part, of the facility's deterioration.

## THERAPEUTIC RECREATION BENEFITS HOMEBOUND SENIORS

Stepping Stones targets homebound older adults (aged 60+) and helps them to once again enjoy life through leisure activities and re-integrate into the community. Eighty-four (84) clients, an increase of 22% over the previous year, received 748 visits of therapeutic recreation services in FY 2003. During this time period 58 new referrals were made to the program, all 58 were assessed, and 55 enrolled.

Thirty-six (36) clients were discharged from the program. Of those discharged, 44% successfully reintegrated back into the com-

munity and/or met their personal goals, 19% moved out of Kent County, 17% returned to a care/hospital setting, 3% were discharged as a result of their restorative benefit of therapy being maximized, and 17% were discharged due to death, need for other care services making them ineligible for therapy until completed, and lack of further interest in the program.

The average client was enrolled in the program for 7.84 months, the minimum being less than 1 month and the maximum being 21 months. Eighty-seven percent (87%) of participants



**Stepping Stones expands treatment options to include aquatic therapy.**

reported income less than \$19,872 for single persons and less than \$29,844 for married persons.

This program is made possible through the generosity of the Kent County Senior Millage.

## GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

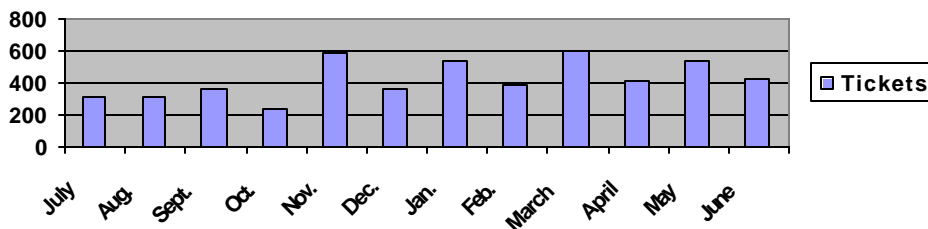
With funding provided by the Area Agency on Aging of West Michigan, the Parks and Recreation Department offered an innovative program for grandparents who are raising their grandchildren. According to the latest census statistics, over 7,000 Kent County grandparents live in households with one or more of their grandchildren younger than the age of 18.

The program provides these non-traditional family groups the opportunity to talk with a facilitator and peers about issues and problems they may be facing while raising their grandchildren. The program also provides children an opportunity to empathize and socialize with other children being raised in similar circumstances. Using a focus group technique, grandparents and children eat dinner together followed by a group activity. The grandparent focus group is discussion oriented (managing finances, working with schools and the community, re-adjusting to the role of parenting), while the children's focus groups utilize activities to with topics such as self-esteem, anger management and socialization.

*"We are going to recreate or we are going to incarcerate."*

*-Sharp James, former president of the National League of Cities*

**Senior Citizen Go! Bus Support**



With funding by the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan, 6,412 Go!Bus rides were provided allowing disabled seniors to obtain food, attend doctor appointments, and see friends, etc.

## PLAYGROUND SAFETY KEY ISSUE FOR 2003

The Parks and Recreation Department continues to solidify its playground inspection program. Professional literature notes playgrounds as the highest risk area for child injury in a park setting. To minimize this risk, every piece of play equipment received a complete inspection in the spring and fall of 2003. Periodic assessment is performed by park maintenance staff and park rangers on a weekly basis. This year 160 man hours were dedicated to playground maintenance within a four month time period.

### Annual Labor , Equipment Costs by Park

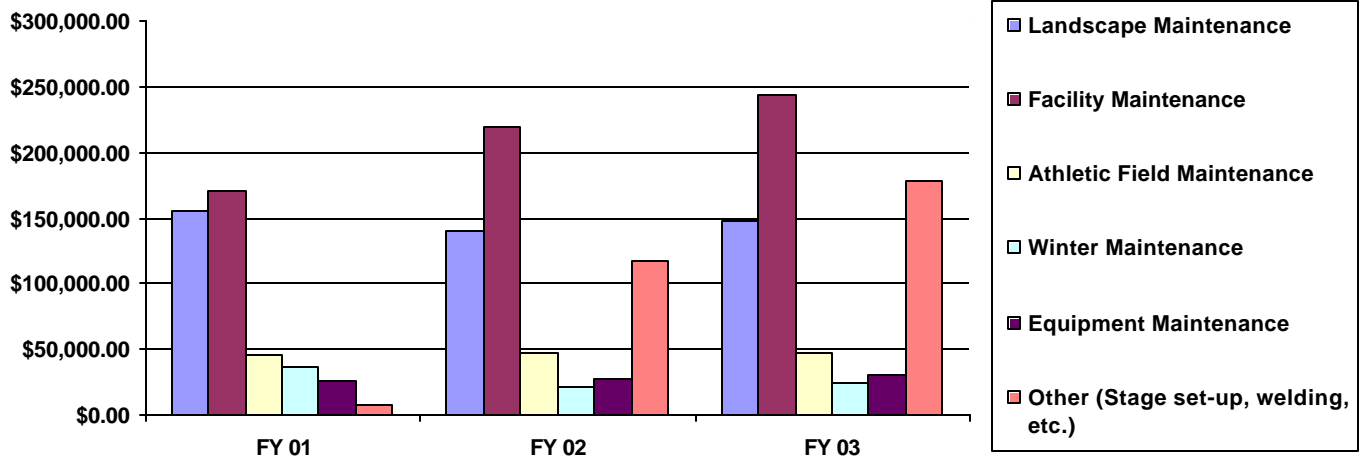
<u>Park</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Battjes	\$13,929
Ferrand	\$1,424
Buck Creek Nature Preserve	\$9,776
40 <sup>th</sup> Street	\$1,656
Gezon	\$36,350
Hillcroft	\$5,348
Ideal	\$48,145
Jackson	\$10,431
Kimble Field	\$22,730
Kelloggsville	\$17,811
Lamar	\$78,211
Lemery	\$21,861
Lions	\$795
Marquette	\$29,838
Oriole	\$10,580
Palmer	\$15,146
Pinery	\$90,744
Prairie	\$1,141
Southlawn	\$2,282

*Providing, preserving, and protecting parks and open space enhance the desirability of an area as well as contributing to the safety and health of its inhabitants.*



**All play equipment received a detailed National Playground Safety Inspection by our certified staff.**

**Park Services  
Cost Report by Activity**



## EDUCATION, SAFETY KEY TO PARK RANGER PROGRAM

The second year of a two year demonstration project continues to show success with the implementation of a Park Ranger Program. A significant increase in patron contacts regarding the City's dog ordinance are noted over the previous year. In addition, significant decline was noted in unauthorized field use and vandalism.

Operations begin the last week of May and run through August, with four rangers patrolling our 20 parks and the Kent Trail system within the City limits. Program goals are to reduce the rate of vandalism and related maintenance costs associated with improper use of park property; to improve the experience of all park patrons through customer service and education; and to enhance the community efforts in expanding and exploring safe natural experiences in an urban park system.

PARK RANGER TALLY SHEET 2003	2003	2002	% Change
ADVISE RULES REGULATIONS	395	376	5%
DOG ORDINANCE	229	96	139%
UNAUTHORIZED SECTION/FIELD USAGE	37	61	-39%
FIRST AID	5	4	25%
MAINTENANCE REFERRAL/HAZARD	2	3	-33%
MAINTENANCE REFERRAL/GENERAL	46	31	48%
INCIDENT/COMPLAINT	10	16	-38%
REFER TO POLICE	26	21	24%
VANDALISM GRAFFITI REPORT	25	42	-40%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>19%</b>

*Just as healthy families and healthy communities are important to our overall well being, so too is the health of our natural environment.*

## MOSQUITO CONTROL PROGRAM IMPLEMENTED IN WAKE OF WEST NILE

The news reports of older adults, children, horses, and birds dying from West Nile virus caused fear for many residents in FY 2003. In order to best respond to concerns from residents, the Director of Parks and Recreation, Park Maintenance Supervisor, and other staff attended educational training sponsored by the Kent County Health Department and the City's Risk Control Supervisor.

Staff learned of the breeding habits of the Culex Mosquito, the specific type of mosquito which carries the virus, how to dispose of animal remains suspected of being infected by the virus, and what steps to take to prevent the spread of West Nile. As a result of this training, the Parks and Recreation Department implemented a storm water catch basin larvicide program. Monthly treatments of catch basins within the parks assist in controlling the mosquito population and alleviate citizen concerns.



## FIRST YEAR OF MASTER PLAN ON TARGET

As required by the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the City of Wyoming adopts a new Community Recreation Master Plan once every five years. Founded on public input gathered through telephone survey, public forums, focus groups, the Park Inventory and Facility Assessment, and as prioritized by the Parks and Recreation Commission, the City Council adopted the new plan in January 2003.

At the conclusion of FY 2003, the department has met the action plan for

2003. In regards to capital initiatives, both Marquette and Kelloggsville Park's had safety modifications completed on their restroom facilities. The plan calls for recreation program distribution to be:

Youth Programs 30-50%  
Adult Programs 20-30%  
Senior Programs 30-50%

Actual Distribution for FY 2003 was:

Youth Programs 34%  
Adult Programs 24%  
Senior Programs 42%

FY 2003 programs offered by program type, based on the International City Managers Association performance measurement system, are noted by percentage:

Aquatics	10%
Outdoor	14%
Arts/Cultural	8%
After school	1%
Other	67%

"Other" includes athletic, physical fitness, and educational programs.

*"As a family we experienced great joy throughout the entire season.*

*Very impressed with the field improvements."*

*- participant evaluation comments, City of Wyoming youth soccer program*

## ADULT PROGRAMS TARGET SURGEON GENERAL WARNING

Recent information provided by the Michigan Governor's Council on Physical Fitness, Health and Sports, indicates that 55.2% of its adult residents fail to meet the U.S. Surgeon General's recommendations for physical activity which is based on 30 minutes of moderate physical activity five or more days per week.

To address the changing trends in fitness, a combination Yoga/Pilate's class was developed. Yoga/Pilate's combines two forms of exercise. Basic Yoga positions and relaxation techniques focus on improving flexibility and mobility. Pilate's, a unique form of stretching and strengthening exercises, focuses on abs and lower back by strengthening and elongating the muscles.

Two evening Yoga/Pilate's classes were offered with each



**"Yoga in the Park" was held in Pinery Park as a means to market our programs and enjoy the outdoors.**

class meeting one time per week for eight weeks. Classes met at the Wyoming Senior Center. The initial winter classes had a total of 61 participants (95% City of Wyoming residents). The success of the winter classes paved the way for three spring classes that had a total of 85 participants (91% City of Wyoming residents).

The Yoga/Pilate's classes, along with our other adult fitness classes (Step Aerobics, Beginning and Intermediate Yoga), continue to provide City of Wyoming residents with an opportunity to increase their physical fitness levels.

# FACILITY RESERVATIONS STABLE

Lodges, shelters, and sections are available at Ideal, Pinery, and Lamar parks to the public for advance reservation. Patrons enjoyed 5,674.75 reserved hours at these facilities in FY 2003.

Ideal Park saw 1,003.50 hours reserved compared to 1,285.5 in FY 2002 and 590.5 in FY 2001. Pinery Park saw an increase to 3,752.75 compared to 2,406 in FY 2002 and 1,883 in FY 2001. Lamar Park registered 918.5 hours of reserved use. Comparison with previous fiscal years is not reliable due to the park being reserved for renovation verse public or program use.



**Design features such as placing play equipment near shelters, such as above at Lamar Park, increase the desirability for reservations.**

These facilities play an integral role in providing opportunities for people, families, neighbors, and communities to interact with one another— reunions, weddings, birthday parties, and picnics.

## FEES: ESSENTIAL BUILDING BLOCKS FOR PROGRAM OPERATIONS

For the second year in a row, fees accounted for just under 8% of the Parks and Recreation Department's budget.

Park reservation fees continued to post an increase over the past year. This is partially attributed to the re-opening of Lamar Park following the previous years closure for renovations and an increase in marketing of park reservation opportunities through the park facility brochure.

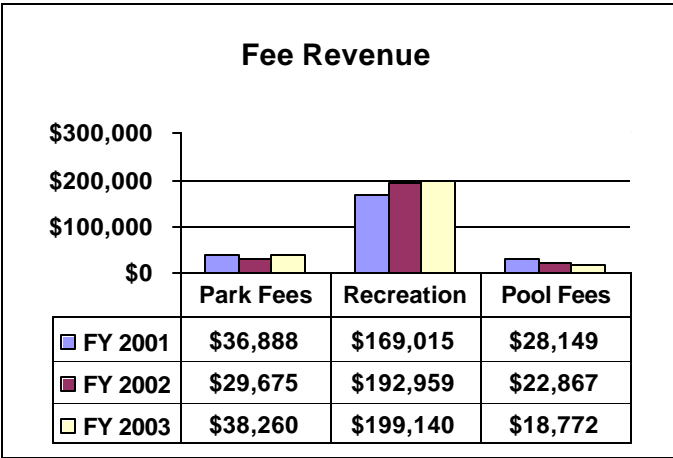
An increase, 3.2%, in fee revenue was noted in Recreation Services. This is consistent with fee increases implemented to offset inflation. Program

offerings remained consistent with previous years.

Pool revenue, which includes our drop-in programs such as lap swim, and open swim, were down 2% this past year. This is due in part to an increased

rate of closure of the facility due to repairs and maintenance, and declining pool aesthetics.

*People who are socially involved are two to five times less likely to suffer from heart disease. (Club Industry, Oct. 1995)*



We're on the Web  
ci.wyoming.mi.us

*Parks and Recreation - the  
benefits are endless!*

The mission of the City of Wyoming Parks and Recreation Department is to provide services that positively impact the social, economic, health and environmental quality of our community. Our vision is to offer services that allow community members to experience physical, mental, and social benefits through their leisure time participation, providing opportunities for young people, adults, and senior citizens to live, grow, and develop into healthy, contributing members of our community. The department is committed to providing leisure and recreation opportunities by developing and maintaining green spaces, facilities, and programs to enrich the quality of life for the citizens of the City of Wyoming.

We use the City's Guiding Principles to assist us in determining value and prioritization of items, activities, guidelines, etc. in meeting the community's needs. The Guiding Principles provide a focal point for these discussions and affirm how we, as staff, proceed. As representatives and employees of the City of Wyoming, our department is committed to: providing optimum customer service, high quality infrastructure standards, community aesthetics, stewardship of resources, and financial stability.

The City of Wyoming believes parks, recreation activities, and leisure experiences provide opportunities for young people, adults, and senior citizens to live, grow, and develop into healthy, contributing members of our community. Parks, playgrounds, and nature trails make our community an attractive and desirable place to live, work, play, and visit in a manner that contributes to our ongoing economic vitality. Our services positively impact the social, economic, health and environmental quality of our community.

## DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION CHART

